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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 007103

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP, G, INL, INL/CTR, DRL, EUR/PGI, EUR/SE
DEPARTMENT FOR VALERIE KWOK USAID E&E/ECA

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SUBJECT: TIP IN TURKEY: IOM REPORTS ON GOT PROGRESS

(U) Classified by Polcounselor John Kunstadter; reasons: E.O. 12958 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (C) Summary: IOM has passed us a summary of its anti-TIP actions and plans for cooperating further with GOT authorities. End Summary.

¶2. (C) International Office for Migration (IOM) Chief of Mission Marielle Lindstrom passed Emboff the following summary of TIP current events:

BEGIN NOTES: Comments to the Tip report - in brief; The Istanbul Shelter is up and running at full capacity. At my last visit in early December the shelter was full. The IOM delegation was accompanied by one representative from HRDF and we met one live-in social worker (Russian/Turkish speaking). The shelter is centrally located in Istanbul. There are security precautions in place but these measures need to be closely monitored to ensure the adequate protection for both staff and victims. There is a local police station nearby, but they have not been tested on response time in case of emergency. IOM pointed out that this needed to be done asap so that we are prepared for the worst case scenario. We were struck by the warm, caring, friendly atmosphere at the shelter. It is evident that HRDF is doing its best to ensure that the victims are treated well. The victims displayed warmth towards the social worker and HRDF staff, which indicates that there is a level of trust established already.

IOM, through the USAID funded project will address the need for a shelter manager, also for Russian speaking hotline operators and the fact that the hotline must be operated 24 hours daily, the calls will be transferred to a mobile number and whoever is on-call will answer. A meeting with MFA on December 21 confirmed the Turkish MFA's interest in making sure the hotline is operational. The MFA has already intervened to make the hotline number possible and they will intervene further to make sure that the hotline number can be accessed across Turkey (also they will explore the possibility of a "call-center" type of set up where calls will come in to a central number, but can be answered anywhere in Turkey. Technologically this may be difficult at this point, but as the services expand, they want to know what mechanisms need to be in place to handle this).

The role of the police, HRDF and IOM will be further clarified in separate MOUs between IOM-MOI and IOM-HRDF. A standard operating procedure will be put in place that further clarifies the responsibilities of the different actors involved, from the identification of the victim, her rescue, assistance at the shelter, collaboration with law enforcement and her return to her home country. There are a few hiccups here, but we are working with HRDF to address them.

Incidentally, a possible new trend is VOTs from Dagestan and the Russian/Kazakh border. As we monitor this trend, we will also explore the possibility of IOM implementing reintegration programs there so that all victims from this region also benefit from coordinated reintegration assistance.

The MFA will urge the MoJ to participate more actively in counter-trafficking trainings to make sure traffickers/recruiters are tried on the new trafficking code rather than pimping which brings a lower sentence.

Turkey has a MOU with Belarus on security cooperation. This agreement was used to facilitate investigations surrounding the death of a Belarusian victim of trafficking in Turkey. Belarusian MOI representatives were working on this case together with the Turkish MOI.

As of December 2004, Turkey is reaching final negotiations on re-admission agreements with the Ukraine. Once this is signed, a bilateral agreement with Ukraine is also foreseen on counter-trafficking.

Turkey has been actively pursuing security cooperation agreements with all source countries for victims of trafficking. To date only Belarus and Georgia have signed.

In November 2004, Turkey was officially admitted as the 109th

member of IOM

Turkish media will be sensitized to trafficking issues through program activities funded by the IOM USAID project next year. Already Turkish media reports on trafficking. There is evidence of a greater understanding of the issues at hand and both Milliyet and Hurriyet as of September 2004 are respectful of the identities of victims when reporting cases in the press.

The MFA has been restructured and a new head of Migration issues has been appointed, Mr. Akif Ayhan. He is responsible for irregular migration, trafficking, integration and refugee issues. The reason for the restructure was to gather migration-related aspects under one roof in order to improve coordination within the MFA. Mr. Iskender Okyay is the head of the illegal migration control department. Ambassador Ersavci remains overall responsible for this area and is IOM's direct counterpart at the MFA.

The MFA also offered assistance to find another shelter facility - perhaps in Ankara, and also suggested that additional NGOs other than HRDF be involved in direct assistance to victims. I mention this to underline the fact that the MFA understands the important role that civil society will play in combating trafficking, and their support will be valuable as our CT activities necessarily expand.

All MFA counterparts stand behind the new USAID funded CT project scheduled for next year and have urged IOM to contact them if there are any problems in the implementation. There is no question that this is a priority for the Turkish MFA.

The number of victims assisted by Turkish authorities this year is 200 (MOI figures presented at the Adana workshop).

END NOTES.

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